Clean water is essential to public health and ecosystem health. Natural systems can be an effective way to reduce nonpoint source pollution, sediment, nutrients (i.e. nitrogen, phosphorus), bacteria, and other pollutants from water supplies. Natural systems also can help avoid the need to invest in or replace expensive, energy-intensive gray infrastructure systems that treat water or manage stormwater. Poor water quality can have other significant economic impacts, including beach closures due to high bacteria levels, the need for dredging due to sedimentation, and limits on water-based recreational activities. The Chicago Wilderness GIV helps with water purification that benefits people and wildlife by containing nearly all of wetlands and other open spaces that currently provide this ecosystem service.

Approximate value of Water Purification services provided by the GIV:
$634 Million